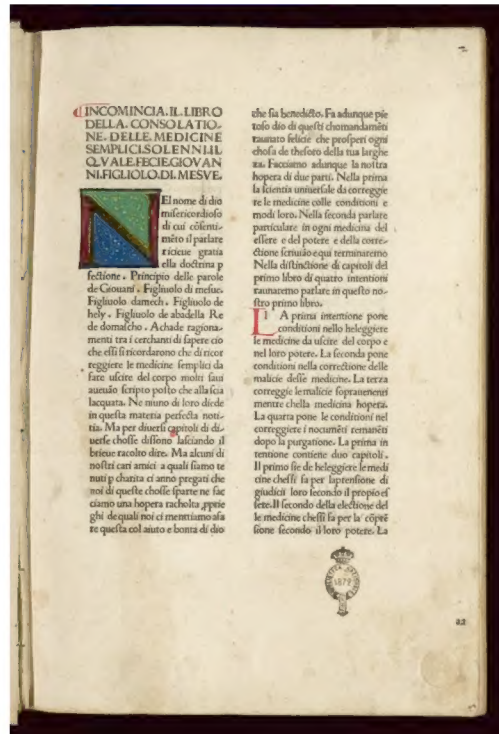


Masawaiyh

Yuhanna ibn Masawaih (circa 777–857), (**Arabic**: يوحنا بن ماسويه), also written **Ibn Masawaih**, **Masawaiyh**, and in Latin **Janus Damascenus**,^[1] or **Mesue**, **Masuya**, **Mesue Major**, **Msuya**, and **Mesüë the Elder** was a **Persian**^[2] or **Assyrian East Syriac Christian** physician^{[3][4]} from the **Academy of Gundishapur**. According to *The Canon of Medicine* for **Avicenna** and 'Uyun al-Anba for the medieval **Arabic** historian **Ibn Abi Usaybi'a**, Masawaiyh's father was Assyrian and his mother was **Slavic**.^[5]



De consolatione medicinarum, 1475

Life



Mesue

Born in 777 CE as the son of a [pharmacist](#) and physician from [Gundishapur](#), he came to [Baghdad](#) and studied under [Jabril ibn Bukhtishu](#).^[6]

He became director of a hospital in [Baghdad](#), and was personal physician to four [caliphs](#). He composed medical treatises on a number of topics, including [ophthalmology](#), fevers, leprosy, headache, melancholia, dietetics, the testing of physicians, and medical [aphorisms](#). One of Masawaiyh's treatises concerns aromatics, entitled, *On Simple Aromatic Substances*.

It was reported that Ibn Masawayh regularly held an assembly of some sort, where he consulted with patients and discussed subjects with pupils. Ibn Masawayh apparently attracted considerable audiences, having acquired a reputation for [repartee](#).

He was also the teacher of [Hunain ibn Ishaq](#).^[6] He translated various [Greek](#) medical works into [Syriac](#), but wrote his own work in [Arabic](#).^[6] [Apes](#) were supplied to him by the [caliph al-Mu'tasim](#) for [dissection](#).^[6]

Many anatomical and medical writings are credited to him, notably the "Disorder of the Eye" (*Daghal al-'ain*), which is the earliest Systematic treatise on [ophthalmology](#) extant in Arabic and the *Aphorisms*, the Latin translation of which was very popular in the [Middle Ages](#).^[6]

He died in [Samarra](#) in 857 CE.

See also

- [Aegyptiacum](#)
- [Ophthalmology in medieval Islam](#)

Sources

For his life and writings, see:

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